

Damsel in Distress

by Zeras

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><p>Damsel in Distress

"This is just embarrassing. " Xellos sighed dejectedly.

His gaze drifted over the main assembly hall of the dragon temple. He wasn't sure, but judging from the size of the complex and from the dominating colors of the robes of the many dragons, he concluded that it was most probably a temple of the worshippers of Valwin, the Airlord. He briefly wondered what they had done for the honor of hosting the spectacle to come.

Lazily, letting the pain of the seal pearl of him, like water of a smooth stone, he gazed at the crowd, who surged in through the open doors. Their hate and fear-filled faces spoke volumes to him. This would end nastily.

And Filia, who lingered cozily next to his sealed self with the rest of his guards on the steps of the podium and inspected her fingernails, made his mood sink steadily in a never known abyss.

When she showed up in front of him this morning in her neat uniform of the soldiers of the Airlord and amid the bulk of his guards surprise and a feeling of unreality had spread inside of him. All of his former unrest had entered uninvited the main stage of his

consciousness. Because Filia belonged to a world, where he was powerful and directed the beings around him at his discretion.

She didn't belong into this world, which inevitably brought his end about.

And yet she was here, directly in front of him; and as an active participant no less.

Two years had passed since they had fought against Dark Star together. Two years had passed since they had seen each other.

Apparently he had stared at her long enough to make her feel uneasy as she turned around to face him.

"The longer I look at you", she remarked ungallantly "the less you still look like Xellos. Not like the one, I knew."

He grinned back in defiance.

"You in contrast, my dear Filia", he replied with biting derision "have stayed as naïve as ever!"

"What's naïve in killing mazoku?" Filia asked defiantly "and what higher honor could exist for a dragon than to serve as a guard at the execution of the slayer of thousands of us?"

"Hmpf", Xellos snorted discontented "at any rate the Filia, whom I thought I knew, would have never been helping happily with inciting a war!"

She paused.

"You kill me as provocation", Xellos continued mercilessly "so that the mazoku lords won't have another choice than to react. With a filthy, bloody war!"

"Which we will win", Filia cut in angrily.

She was right, of course. Xellos and Filia both knew, that all three living dragon lords had agreed to fight in this war with the golden dragons. The chances were high that they would be superior in the end.

And to make everything worse Xellos, one of the most powerful and sly mazoku in this world, had let himself get caught by the dragons; and only because he hadn't wanted to imagine that they would set up such a daring trap for him.

"You join a temple at exactly the moment when its leaders are about to incite bloodshed", he jeered "and that although you left your old temple for exactly that reason. That's so rich!"

"I don't do this because I want to", she shouted "should there really be a war, then Val and I will be defenseless alone. You mazoku would kill any dragon, that you could get your hands on. Only a temple will give us protection."

Xellos burst out laughing. "You want to protect Val by bringing him

back to the golden dragons? That's ridiculous. He'd even be safer with mazoku!"

"The council of elders promised to me" Filia hissed haughtily "they will protect both of us."

Xellos looked into Filia's eyes and knew that she was lying. She was afraid for Val, but she just didn't have a choice.

'I guess, both of us are not, what we've been before, anymore', Xellos thought darkly.

Poor Filia. She should have never gone to the dragons. She should have stayed among the humans, maybe even go to Lina Inverse. There her and Val's chances would have been better in the fighting to come.

But it was probably just that, that she had lived among humans for so long, that had made her leave them now. She wouldn't want to drag them into a war that shouldn't be their concern at all.

In the end it just seemed like both of them were going to be equally damned.

"Why are you here?" Xellos asked her, feeling tired "to get back at me?"

"There's no need for you to know", Filia replied, her voice leaden.

They stared at each other. For the first time Xellos got a feeling that they had said enough to each other and that no more word and no more insult had room between them. Without his knowledge it had ended.

He sighed deeply and turned away. The room had gotten crowded by now.

Suddenly a loud crashing sound passed through the hall and the dragons jerked their heads up.

The noise of explosions carried from outside and grew louder.

"Mazoku" somebody suddenly cried "they are attacking!"

In an instant chaos broke out. Orders rang through the air and all those dragons, who had taken so long to get into the assembly hall, now tried to leave it all at once as fast as possible to defend the temple.

Xellos found the whole thing to become gradually funny again.

The noise of the attack continued and became deafening. A missile hit the roof above them and made the walls shake. A long crack formed in the ceiling exactly above Xellos head.

"Seems like there came a lot of them", he observed expertly "I'm touched."

"Oh, will you shut up", Filia growled and ran to the rest of the guards when she saw a member of the temple's council hurry over to them.

"Activate the destruction spell immediately", he commanded hectically when he reached them "we won't be able to hold those mazoku off much longer, there are too many of them. The rest of the soldiers are trying to delay them for some time. They will flee afterwards and you will do the same as soon as Xellos is dead. Let those mazoku capture this temple together with his corpse!"

He hurried outside and left the now empty hall except for Xellos and his twenty guards, who started to form a loose and wide circle around him to initiate the execution spell.

Xellos searched for Filia's gaze but she stood somewhere behind him and the seal made it strenuous for him to move his head as it tightened around him now.

The pain it caused him intensified until it became too strong to ignore and Xellos gasped, angry and ashamed. His human form began to flicker.

The air grew heavy around him and between the dragons who concentrated, gathering their strength.

Then their captain raised his arm.

"On my command" he shouted "One, twoâ€| three!"

And in perfect unison all dragons around Xellos toppled over. They buckled like puppets, whose threads got cut, and then they were lying still on the floor.

Xellos stared.

A new load of dust trickled down on him from the crack in the ceiling.

What theâ€|

Something moved behind him.

With effort Xellos turned his head.

Behind him, too, his executers were lying silently on the floor except for one, who snored, and another, who unhurriedly dusted off her clothes.

"That wasâ€| a sleeping spell?" Xellos asked Filia tentatively.

She straightened, smiling, and Xellos watched her mesmerized.

"Well, well" Filia closed in on him "what have we here? Is it damsel in distress? 'Cause this picture of misery can hardly be Xellosâ€|"

The smile was a grin by now.

"And if that is the case then I guess I won't need to feel guilty

nowâ€|"

She crouched before his kneeling figure and touched one hand to his forehead, over which the golden sparks of the dragon's seal flitted and lastly, finally ceased.

A huge weight left Xellos shoulders. He was free.

"What is it?" Filia asked him when he continued to just sit there and stare at her "in case it makes you feel better I think you are right. The golden dragons would never protect Val. And I won't drag humans into this. But maybe the Greater Beast" and Xellos yelped at that point "will at least keep her promise to me. It's our best chance and anyway â€" I'm not going to let a war break out."

Xellos blinked at Filia. It was so like her to want to prevent fighting and yetâ€|

"I really think I don't know you at all" he said weakly.

"Well" Filia responded and held out her hand to help him get back on his feet "I guess we'll have a lot of time from now on to get to know each other again."

THE END

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><p>Author's Note: This is an old story I reposted since the site it was on originally doesn't seem to exist anymore. It was written for a 'damsel in distress' prompt. When I thought about that prompt in relation to Xellos and Filia I immediately imagined Filia being rescued by Xellos again. I thought it would be interesting to reverse that image and for once make Xellos the damsel who can do nothing to change his fate until he is saved by Filia. The result of these thoughts is the story you just read. I hope you enjoyed it :)

End
file.